UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT APPEALS TO HUNTERS NOT TO SHOOT EAGLES

The Department of the Interior today appealed to hunters not to shoot eagles or any other large hawk-like birds--which may actually prove to be eagles and not hawks.

The bald eagle, national emblem of the United States, is becoming increasingly rare, the Department said, and studies by Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife indicate that indiscriminate shooting is still a factor in the population decline of these birds.

Allan T. Studholme, Chief of the Bureau's Division of Management and Enforcement, said that inexperienced hunters are sometimes frustrated at their inability to find game and "occasionally take potshots at hawks or other living targets."

"Many of these 'hawks' turn out to be eagles," Studholme said. "Furthermore, the larger hawks themselves are protected in most States."

Practically every hawk that a hunter sees actually is beneficial, Studholme added. The only ones that occasionally might be considered less than desirable are usually so shy and secretive they are seldom seen.

Both bald and golden eagles--the two native species--are completely protected by Federal law. The bald eagle, so-called because of its white head, has been protected since 1940. Golden eagles were given Federal protection in October, 1962.

"There is no excuse for indiscriminate shooting of eagles and the law will be rigidly enforced as in the past," Studholme said. "Surely these magnificent birds warrant all the protection people can give them."

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